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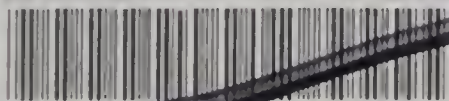
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The Mexican War.

A

DISCOURSE

DELIVERED AT

THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH IN FAIR HAVEN,

ON THE

ANNUAL FAST OF 1847.

By REV. BURDETT HART.

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PREFATORY NOTE.

The following discourse was not designed for publication, but for oral delivery to the writer's congregation. Members of that congregation have thought the truth which was spoken would do good if it could be read, and for that purpose, at their solicitation, it is presented to them in its present form.

Events which have transpired since it was written, have only served to confirm the positions which are here maintained, and to demonstrate the importance of correct and candid views of the existing war. Truth upon this subject should not be regarded with the feelings and prejudices of partisans, but with the sentiments of patriots and Christians. And it is a cheering fact, that strong men in both of our great political parties are rightly regarding this matter, and are bold in their denunciation of the war. When shall the time arrive that the North will show the same devotion for Liberty that the South manifests for Slavery? That time, if it comes not too late, will be the date of a new and good era for the land.

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DISCOURSE.

JOSHUA, XIX. 47.—And the coast of the children of Dan went out too little for them; therefore the children of Dan went up to fight against Leshem, and took it, and smote it with the edge of the sword, and possessed it, and dwelt therein, and called Leshem, Dan, after the name of Dan their father.

A NEW national era has commenced. It is the era of conquest. The settled policy of our government, from its origin to the present time, has been abandoned. The armies of the United States are encamped on a foreign territory. Our troops are in possession of foreign citadels, and the inhabitants of another land, on their own soil, are forced to yield obedience to our laws. It is written in the preamble to our free Constitution, that one purpose for which it was ordained, was "to provide for the common defence;" but we do not find that its founders ever cherished the idea that this nation would be engaged in aggressive war. It is proved from the annals of our history, that while the citizens of this country have been prompt to maintain their own rights, they have been slow to seek occasion to trample on the rights of others. It was the policy of Washington to stand aloof from the intrigues and struggles of the European States, and to direct the attention and energies of this people to the cultivation and development of their own resources. The wisdom of the father of his country has been evident to his successors, and they have, until a very recent date, followed in his footsteps. Neither on that continent, nor on this, have we interfered with the rights, or engaged in the conflicts of foreign nations. Americans have indeed sympathized with the struggles of those who, from time to time, roused perhaps by our own example, have endeavored to upturn the thrones of tyranny, and maintain the natural rights and sacred principles of humanity; but the nation has never been engaged in offensive operations against another power.

Once our land shook beneath the tread of mustering legions, and the energies of an infant people were roused to cast off the yoke of foreign oppression and foreign rule. And once again, for the defence

of our cherished rights, the lakes and the ocean rocked beneath the thunder of the pealing ordnance, and witnessed the triumph of our gallant navy. Since the Declaration of their Independence, the United States have waged no wars but those with foreign powers. Unlike the more powerful nations of the Old World, we have never sent forth our armies to obtain territory by violence. The credit of the nation has not been impaired; the treasury has not been exhausted; the sinews of the government have not been paralyzed; her resources have not been squandered; the people have not been called to forsake their homes and the pursuits of peace; thousands have not been offered in distant climes to the bloody Moloch of battle, that our banners might wave over conquered provinces, and distant tribes and people might acknowledge allegiance to our sovereignty.

But the times have changed. It has come to pass that a new order of things has been adopted. This government, renouncing the wise policy of the past, has taken an aggressive position. The era of conquest has commenced.

I do not propose, in my remarks to-day, to depart from the proper field of my duty as a minister of the gospel. It is not my province to speak as a partisan—to defend or oppose the tactics of any class or organization in the political world. But it is my privilege and my duty, a duty in the discharge of which I trust I shall never falter, a duty which I believe you would wish me to fulfill in all faithfulness—to enforce upon my hearers the claims of God's law and the supremacy of His government, in all the relations, not less the political than others, of their lives. The pulpit is on all suitable occasions to speak boldly of National Wrong, and to assert the accountability of the nation to Him, who ruleth among the armies of heaven and over the inhabitants of the earth. I do not suppose that there is a perfect analogy between our present position as a nation, and that of the children of Dan as spoken of in the text: and yet it has seemed to me that the resemblance may be traced in some particulars so nicely, that the passage may well be the starting-point of our reflections—the base of our operations, as it were, on the subject of the Mexican War.

The children of Dan, it seems, had not territory enough for their purposes: “their coast went out too little for them:” instead of being able to carry their ‘peculiar institutions’ over all the region where they had intended to locate themselves, they had been confined to a nar-

lower section; more powerful neighbors had preoccupied the soil or dislodged them, and they were forced to abandon the idea of regaining it for their own possession. Not wishing to lose their own distinction and their equality to the other tribes, the children of Dan went up to fight against Leshem; avoiding a war for what was in fact their allotted territory, because it was claimed by an exceedingly powerful nation, the warlike Philistines, they summoned their forces and attacked a more feeble neighbor, occupying territory at the foot of Mount Lebanon, near the sources of the Jordan. They were successful in the struggle, and took possession of the region which they sought, and smote it with the edge of the sword, and dwelt therein, introducing their own customs where they were unknown before; and they called Leshem, Dan, after the name of Dan their father: it lost its former name, and another was given it, a name of honor indeed, but at the same time proving its subjection to the conquering Danites.

You will not require me to state the resemblance between this portion of Jewish history and the history of our own country for a short period past. I need not remind you that in certain sections of the country, it was thought "the coast went out too little for them;" that by reason of a compromise the 'peculiar institutions' of the South had been debarred admission north and west of the parallel $36^{\circ} 30'$, so that while the tide of emigration was pouring into the vast wilderness between the Mississippi and the Pacific, and new States constantly applying for admission to the Federal Union, were giving an overwhelming preponderance to the political power of the North, the South was likely to remain in a stationary position; that for the sake of preserving the rank and influence and patronage which they had so long maintained, the people of the slaveholding States fomented civil war in the State of Texas, and finally annexed it to the Union; that avoiding a conflict with England for a territory to which we had long asserted our claim, the government ordered the armies of the United States to move upon the soil which was at that moment inhabited and cultivated by the citizens of Mexico, and thus plunged the nation into a war, for the express purpose of enlarging the area of freedom—freedom for men to hold their fellow-men as chattels—a war which it would seem has but just commenced—a war which will no doubt enable the invaders to possess the land, and to dwell in it, and to call it United States, after the name of the country of the con-

querors, even as Texas is now one of the United States. You all understand the history of the past few years, and are able to judge of the resemblance between our policy and the course of the Danites, as stated in the text.

It must be evident to every one that this policy, whatever may be said of its expediency, is in direct contrast to the elder and more worthy policy of our government. History will decide whether it is not as deleterious to the welfare of the Union, as the former was auspicious and salutary. The era of conquest has commenced. It is an era marked with blood. It will be an ensanguined page in our annals which shall date the commencement of this period. It is a new thing that the citizens of the Republic are called upon to carry the banners of their country into a foreign State. It is the first time that the proud eagle which has watched our shores from his lofty eyrie to swoop the foe that dared invade them with deadly beak and talons, has been called to fold his dark wing over the fallen forms of our warriors slumbering on stranger soil.

I. Let us, in the first place, consider the CAUSES of this war. War, in any and every form, is dreadful. Yet there may be causes, which shall not only render it lawful, but expedient also, for a nation to make the appeal to arms. In reviewing the steps which one by one have led to the present difficulties between the two Republics of North America, it is evident that many of the reasons which are and have been given for the occurrence of these difficulties, are the veriest pretexts, and would so be considered by an impartial observer. To understand the whole matter, you need to go back to the time when our citizens began their emigration to the most eastern of the States of Mexico. Great inducements were proffered, both by the State and General Governments, for citizens of the United States to remove to a region comparatively uninhabited. In process of time, so great had been the influx to Texas, by the citizens of the South, and by individuals who found it convenient to leave the North, that the sympathies of the great majority of the people, instead of being with the government to which they owed allegiance, were strongly with the United States. An act of the General Government of Mexico, which converted the sovereign States into departments of that government, was the ground of a revolution, by which Texas became an independent Republic. This Republic, although the consummation was for some years deferred, was eventually annexed

to the United States. Mexico, having from the first claimed that Texas was a revolted province, and having been at war with her, more or less, during the nine years of her declarative independence, menaced a renewal of the war with the United States, for the conquest of that province. With the advance of our army to the Rio Grande, the war actually commenced. It has been carried into the enemy's territory. His strong citadels, and many of his seaport towns, have been taken. Over a large extent of soil, the United States hold nominal jurisdiction. And the intention of the government is to obtain satisfaction for the former claims of our citizens against Mexico, and for the expenses of the present war, by a seizure of territory sufficiently ample to cover them both. Such, in brief, are the steps which have led to that position which we now sustain. The course of the government in regard to Texas, is the first thing to be particularly noticed; the designs of the government in regard to the termination of the war, is the second thing to be carefully observed. It is idle to talk of national honor, in the outset, demanding the appeal to arms. What is called national honor, may not perhaps now allow this nation to recede from its present position. But before any decisive measures were taken by force, there was higher honor in treating so weak a neighbor with long-suffering and great forbearance, than in showing her our superior power, especially when we had just yielded our claims so readily in a dispute with the mistress of the seas. And even now it is questionable whether higher honor would not be exhibited in efforts to secure peace, even if attended with some sacrifice, than in efforts to prolong the conflict. It is idle to talk of our claims upon Mexico. They amounted to \$2,026,399.68. They were acknowledged. And even if they had never been liquidated, would the loss have atoned even for the loss of life in a single battle? There are other means for securing the payment of such claims than war. But these things were not the cause of the present war. Except for the matter of Texas, except for the desire of more territory, we are safe in saying peace would have been preserved. The coast of the South "went out too little for them." By the Missouri compromise, the domain of slavery had been confined within certain limits, and the 'area of freedom' had been preserved pure from contamination with that cursed system. The power which had so long been wielded by the South, which had appropriated to the aggrandizement of a peculiar

portion of the Union the high places of honor and trust, seemed likely to pass away. The hardy pioneers of the North were pressing over the vast wilderness of the West; the forest was falling before them; towns and cities were springing up as if by magic behind them, and all the marks of a high and advanced civilization were witnessed as the fruits of their enterprise and labor; while sovereign States were, one after another, formed from these materials, which took their position side by side with their sister sovereignties, which were free from the foul blot of slavery, and which would give the weight of their rapidly augmenting influence in favor of freedom, and the rights of the non-slaveholding portion of the Union. Here we can learn the cause of the war. There was need of territory to balance the territory of the North. There was need of a domain of slavery to balance the domain of freedom. To these things I trace the present unfortunate struggle. I accuse the members of no political party. I blame no man's political preferences. But it is time, high time, that we of the North, of every party and every persuasion, understand the position which we now sustain—the position which the country sustains. We are accountable for it at the bar of our own consciences; we are at the bar of the public opinion of the civilized world. We shall be held accountable for it at the bar of the God and Judge of nations.

In every step which has conducted to this war, I see the impress of that system, the most accursed that the sun looks down upon,—that system which blasts the region where it exists, as though some moral miasma was tainting the atmosphere with the breath of ruin, and which spreads its desolating influence far and wide over the land scourged with its existence.

The claims of *slavery* are the cause of the Mexican war. The proof is before us. When the citizens of the United States commenced their emigration to Texas, they found the half-civilized inhabitants of that country, in one respect, far in advance of the more enlightened people of this Union. They left behind them heathen and human slaves; they came to a land untrodden by a slave. It was a land, large and good, wherein the people dwelt quiet and secure, even as the five spies of Dan found the land which they afterwards seized and possessed. It had a soil rich and well adapted to the productions of the South. It promised to open a wide and profitable market to the breeders of human stock. The determina-

tion was formed that Texas should become independent of Mexico. The Southern press, years before the revolt, declared that the people of that State would throw off their allegiance to Mexico, so soon as they should have a reasonable pretext. The capital of the South was invested in Texan lands. A system of operations was commenced which resulted, as it was designed to result, in the separation of Texas from Mexico, and the introduction of American slaves to its rich plantations.

Take the next step which conducted to the present war,—the annexation of that State to the American Union. Why was the annexation consummated? I will not detain you here. You have heard the reason stated on the floor of the Senate, during the last session of Congress, by him who was at the time of the annexation the Secretary of State. No one can impeach his testimony. He assures us that it was an event to whose accomplishment he devoted his energies, and in behalf of which he yielded other matters of importance. And he furthermore assures us, that the great motive which led and urged him to its consummation, was the belief that Great Britain was about to interfere for the abolition of slavery, in what was, at that time, the Republic of Texas. It was that slavery might be perpetuated there, that Texas was annexed to the United States. I know that it was not so regarded by many who were instrumental in securing that result. I know that the message of the President of the United States, recommending the adoption of the terms of annexation, does not allude to this motive. He says, “The extension of our coastwise and foreign trade, to an amount almost incalculable—the enlargement of the market for our manufactures—a constantly growing market for our agricultural productions—safety to our frontiers, and additional strength and stability to the Union—these are the results which would rapidly develop themselves, upon the consummation of the measure of annexation.” And yet, John Tyler knew, what Mr. Calhoun has since confessed, that paramount to all these reasons—immensely paramount to all these reasons—was the overshadowing reason, that thereby the system of slavery could be benefited, and its continuance and its power be perpetuated.

Again, look at the proximate steps which led to actual war. They were taken at the beck of slavery, that there might be a pretext for wresting from Mexico some of her fairest provinces, to become the heritage of human bondage. There was need of territory for the growth and expansion of that system, to balance the territory of

freedom. A few facts only will now be adduced. During the last session of Congress, a resolution was introduced into the lower chamber, by a member from South Carolina, to the effect that all territory hereafter acquired, north of the line of the Missouri compromise, should be *free*, and that all south of that line might be formed into *slave States*. Every member from the South voted for the adoption of the resolution. The fact speaks for itself. You know how the famous Wilmot Proviso, the design of which was to exclude slavery from the territory which may be gained by conquest or by treaty, has met with the strong and bitter opposition and denunciation of the entire slaveholding portion of the Union, not only in the Capitol, but throughout the entire South. The great champion of slavery, in his place in the Senate, has opposed this proviso with the force and eloquence which characterize him, and has declared that its passage would lead inevitably to a dissolution of the Union. The Southern press has asserted that its adoption would prevent the South from taking any further part in the war—thus confessing that the sole object for which they fight is to widen the area of slavery; while the General Assembly of Virginia has unanimously resolved, that any enactment of the Federal Government, which has for its object the prohibition of slavery in any territory to be acquired either by conquest or treaty, will not be recognized as binding, and an imposing convention at Charleston has reiterated and adopted the resolution. These things need no comment. They prove that the pretexts put forth by the leaders in this existing war, and upon the strength of which the North has hitherto acted, are the grossest sophistry, and are only worthy of supreme and lasting execration from every lover of human freedom. It is a subject before which, at the South, the barriers of party fall as though they were weakness itself. It is a subject which we of the North should also regard, untrammelled and unprejudiced by party principles and party predilections. Can we not rally with a moral courage as unswerving and fearless for the cause of liberty, as their devotion is entire and uncompromising for the wrongs of oppression? Shall it be said, that while the upholders of slavery were united as one man to widen its domain and extend its influence, the champions of freedom were found unfaithful and pusillanimous in the time of trial? At this period of the world's history, when the bands of servitude are dropping from the toil-worn and groaning vassals of tyranny, when the sternest autocrat is somewhat relaxing his iron rule, and from all the plains once cultivated

in terror and in tears, there is going up the shout of redemption, shall we who inhabit this soil, baptized with the blood of freedom's martyrs, hallowed as the resting-place of those who, with arms of strength, and the devotion of apostles, stood around the war-rocked cradle of liberty in the days of her infancy—shall we who look back with reverence to our Puritan ancestry, illustrious for all their wonderful sacrifices and toils in behalf of the heritage which is our delight and glory—shall we be the patrons and upholders of a conflict, designed to widen the limits of human bondage, and to continue to curse our country with the woes and wrongs of slavery? O, if it was a war for our altars and our fires—if it was to turn back the insulting footsteps of some proud invader from the shores which he was dishonoring with his presence—if it was to maintain the sacred principles which our fathers struggled and died to establish—I know that there would be a rousing of human energies such as the world has never witnessed,—I know that the thunders of an indignant remonstrance would resound from every valley, and roll down from every mountain of our Alpine New England, and the voice of a lofty eloquence would ring through the vaulted halls of deliberative wisdom, and the great ones and the mighty would unite their strength, and our entire population would be in arms; and from every town and hamlet they would issue forth in the might of manhood, and the vigor of youth, to prove their patriotism, and defend their inheritance! But we are unjust and ungenerous to ourselves and to others, when we in any mode countenance and sustain a war which is in direct antagonism to the genius of our constitution, and in defiance of an outraged public opinion.

II. Let us consider, in the second place, the CONSEQUENCES of this war. Here I was intending to enlarge; but my limits will only allow me to hint at some things which are worthy of extended thought. We cannot suppose that the new course of policy which has now been adopted will be transient in its results. The mind of the nation will be directed in new channels; and, as it is difficult to arrest the strong tides of a river which has once been diverted from its course, and has burst through the banks and barriers which confined it, so will it be difficult to compass and control the new impulses which will be imparted to our people. If once our power is firmly planted within the confines of Mexico, who can tell where the range of our ambition and cupidity shall end? If once we earnestly enter on the career of conquest, what boundaries shall de-

fine our progress? Why shall not our armies go forth, like the all-conquering legions of Rome, to subdue a world? Why shall not some daring Napoleon mount the blood-red car of war, and drive it over the wasted wrecks of empire? Then may our troops revel in "the halls of the Montezumas," and the last vestige of Mexican independence pass away like a dream. And that car of victory may not pause until a mighty continent shall acknowledge the supremacy of the great Republic of the North. The last symbol of European dominion may be obliterated from the map of the hemisphere. The colonies of England and of Russia may be subdued before the might of our invincible arms; and the tottering dynasties of the South, whose only rule is misrule, may become component parts of this gigantic empire. May God avert that day! There is no passion more to be dreaded among us than the lust of conquest—the desire of dominion. Our boundaries are already wide enough for our safety and our permanence: if they should be greatly enlarged, our nationality would totter to its fall. But one consequence of a war like this is to cherish the passion for dominion.

There are some things which are the necessary consequences of a war like the one in which we are now engaged. It will deprive the nation of many of its noblest sons. Amid the chances of battle, the bravest and the most worthy have no insurance of safety. Already we have witnessed the congregated thousands in our commercial cities assembled to pay the last honors to the remains of those who fell in the fierce-fought battles which have now transpired. The muffled drum, the trumpet blast, the quick report of the minute-gun, have heralded their consignment to the tomb. They were in the vigor of manhood when they fell: they have finished prematurely their mission in the world. And think you not this war will result in sorrow untold in the scattered homes of our country? We read the results of the successful contests with enthusiasm, and rejoice in the valor and superiority of our troops. How different would be our feelings if the hundreds or thousands who are slain were from families which we have known—if they were our brothers and friends, as they are the brothers and friends of others! There is necessarily a waste of treasure—treasure enough to have lined our extensive coast with break-waters and light-houses, which would have remained for ages the monuments of our wisdom and the guardians of our mariners. There is necessarily the immorality, the corruption, the morbid excitement, the vice of the camp, and an in-

fluence for evil on society at large, which are the universal accompaniments of war. There is necessarily an attention of the people to this exciting topic. Their thoughts are called away, in some measure, from the pursuits of peace: the claims of the Prince of Peace are not apt to be regarded in the midst of war. Those who do not fall in the struggle, bring back to their homes and their employments the habits which have been acquired in a school unfavorable to a rigid morality. Instead of cultivating the friendship and good-will of a neighbor, which in the midst of great obstacles has endeavored to imitate our example, we are by this war exasperating the feelings of a passionate, and inflexible, and vindictive people,—causing those who might have been our allies upon this continent in promoting the principles of republican liberty and resisting the encroachments of monarchical aggression, to become a wily and revengeful and permanent border-foe.

These things are the necessary consequences of the war—consequences fearful enough to make us shrink back from its prosecution, to stay this work of ruin, even in mid course, although it may be attended with a sacrifice of what is falsely called national honor. But there are possible consequences still more dreadful, and from whose actual existence we turn away appalled and saddened.

“ And in that work of death what ills *may* come,—
There’s the respect that makes calamity of war.”

The present war with Mexico, caused as it has been by the demands of slavery, has aroused a spirit which will not be quelled by a feeble power. Perhaps no period in the annals of the past has been attended with such omens of evil for the stability of our government, and the harmony of those clashing interests which divide the North and the South, as this whose scroll is now unrolling before the world. On the one hand, we see the steady purpose to resist the further encroachments of human slavery on the soil which is now uncontaminated by its presence. On the other hand, we see the firm determination to extend the system of negro servitude over the territory which may be acquired by conquest or by treaty. Never was the cool spirit of the North more thoroughly aroused: never were the warm passions of the South more universally excited. It needs only some occasion suitable for their development, to manifest the proof of their power and the energy of their action. Here, where slavery is viewed with all its blighting and destructive effects, pa-

ralyzing the energies of the state, corrupting the virtues of the citizens, and spreading far and near its withering and desolating influence of moral and political death—here, there is the deep conviction that it should be confined within its present limits—that its terrible power for evil should be restrained, and that, if those who now suffer from its effects in every relation of life, still cherish it as an inalienable boon, it shall not be allowed to curse others also. There, where it is viewed as a choice legacy, and loved as a darling institution, there is the strong resolve that it shall be extended as our country extends, that it shall be recognized in the new domain to be controlled by our laws. The North has already taken its position. It is a position from which it cannot recede. The South has also taken its stand—and to that stand it will adhere. Acquire new territory, and who shall fathom the dark future before us? Shall that territory become, not what it is now, the arena of conflict for warring nations, but the battle-field of brothers—the plain where the North and the South shall meet in the deadly struggle? Ah! from that day may God in his mercy preserve my country! But the declaration has already gone forth, that the South will proceed to the last alternative for the maintainance of its position, that slavery shall be introduced into all or a part of the acquired territory. And the North has pledged itself to preserve that same territory free from the unhallowed curse of negro bondage. If territory shall be acquired, what remains but fratricidal conflict? The possibility of such an issue gives to this war a supremely dreadful character. If there is a curse more fearful than any other which can fall upon this land, it is *civil war*. And he who breaks down the bulwarks of our union—who lights up the glaring torch of internal commotion—is the prime minister of woe! Ah! it would be a conflict sadder than any which the world, in the long history of her bloody and fearful conflicts, has ever witnessed! It would dash the fairest hopes of man. It would wreck this last and noblest experiment of free and equal government. And a wail would go up from the dungeons of those despotic lands where the wretched have been cheered by visions of hope from these bright shores beyond the rolling ocean. And tyranny would stalk forth more fearless on its hideous mission, and grasp its iron mace with a hand that had ceased to tremble. If such are the possible consequences of this war, does it not become our government to pause in its plans?—does it not become each citizen to oppose his individual influence to its perpetuation? Do not

the highest motives which can be urged for its prosecution sink before them into comparative insignificance, nay, into very nothingness?

We have thus considered the *causes* and *consequences* of this war which is now in progress. It is in progress. Already thousands have fallen on the plains of Mexico, as the mournful monuments of its existence. They shall never come back to the homes that they left in joy and hope. Hardly have we all heard the news of the last successful struggle, in which seven hundred of our soldiers fell, and sixty-three of our officers were killed and wounded. And who can inform us what is yet to transpire? We seem to be only at the beginning of the end.

Too long, indeed, has the North succumbed to the haughty and overbearing spirit of the South. They, who have lorded it over their human chattels, have also lorded it over the obsequious representatives of Northern freemen. The South has grasped the positions of honor and wealth and power in our government. She has held five-sixths of all the high offices of honor and trust. The talent of the North has remained in comparative obscurity, while Southern men of inferior abilities have wielded the influence and patronage of the government.

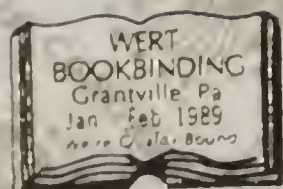
The South has been indulged until she has become as willful and perverse as a pampered and petted child. For her the Florida and Louisiana purchases were made. For her a long and bloody war was maintained among the swamps of Florida. And when the North has hesitated to yield to all her imperious demands, she has threatened a dissolution of the Union. For the acquisition of slave-territory we are now engaged in a wicked war, whose issues are in the unknown future. The period for forbearance and truckling slavishness has passed. We are to remember our birth-right. We owe a debt of justice to ourselves. We owe a debt of obedience to God. This war—I hesitate not to say it—is in resistance of His commands. We are forgetful who is on the throne. It is a Being who is fearfully just. He watches the nations—and the whole history of the past assures us that He metes out to them a terrible recompense for their crimes. The blasted ruins of States illustrious in the records of former ages, stand as stern monuments along the track of time, mournfully and faithfully reminding us of our duty or our doom. Let us heed in season the voice that comes up from the sepulchres of departed greatness.

The same great Being now rules the nations of men, who in for-

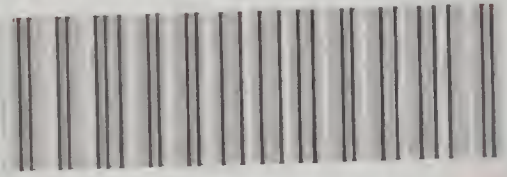
mer times has overturned the thrones and wrecked the dominion of the proudest empires. I look back along the course of empire, and everywhere I see the testimonials of the solemn truth, that God is in history. Mightier monarchies than any that now exist, have sent forth their all-conquering legions over the plains of earth, and their name and power have been known among all nations; but at His fiat they have passed away like the mists of the morning. Dragons and satyrs dance in their habitations, and the dwellings which were once thronged with a rejoicing people, are full of doleful creatures. And so it may be with those who are now exulting in the pride and greatness of their dominion. Another Attila may be the scourge of God. Another Napoleon may lead his triumphant armies into the noblest capitals of the earth, and wave his eagle-banners over the monuments of kingly glory, and crush their demolished thrones beneath the iron heel of his myriad warriors. And what will it avail to us, my countrymen, if with the triumph of our arms we expose ourselves to the wrath and frown of Jehovah? What though the almost impregnable fortresses of a sister Republic yield to the matchless energies of our troops, and from the Gulf to the Pacific a vast domain acknowledges allegiance to our sovereignty, and our institutions are extended over a foreign soil by the force of arms, if with it all we draw down the wrath of an offended God? There may be a display of patriotism and of valor—but it would be better for us to manifest the proofs of piety and philanthropy. Already the retiring Indian, the sole survivor of a noble race, as he moves sadly away from the sepulchres of his fathers,—already the wretched African, on the soil moistened with his tears and blood,—seem to invoke the justice of Heaven upon our land. Let us not cause another people to curse our name and cry for the vengeance of the Most High to visit us. We have too great a work before us to exhaust our energies on that which is sure to bring us no benefit, and may bring us irretrievable ruin.

On this day of public humiliation, fasting and prayer, let us look to the God of our fathers, that He would deliver us from the heavy judgments we deserve: let us humble ourselves before Him for our private and public sins: let us implore the vouchsafement of His continued favors, that He would lead our nation to terminate the existing war, that the sound of battle and the sight of garments rolled in blood may cease, and that we may live at peace with all the nations of the earth, and be that happy people whose God is Jehovah.





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